

Counting of the Omer 2024

Day 4

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Psalms 119:25-32

This morning while I was thinking about the *counting of the Omer*, I thought of the priests of Yisrael on the Temple Mount, the priests who lift up the *minchah*, מִנְחָה, or grain offering, and the elevation or burnt offering, the *olah* עֹלָה that opens and closes the day.

*Now when anyone presents a grain offering as an offering to Yahweh, his offering **SHALL BE** of fine flour, and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it. He shall then bring it to Aharon's sons, the priests; and shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil with all of its frankincense. And the priest shall offer it up in smoke as its memorial portion on the altar; an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to Yahweh. The remainder of the grain offering belongs to Aharon and his sons: a thing most holy, of the offerings to Yahweh by fire (Vayiqra, Leviticus 2:1-3).*

I don't know why, but when I picture this event in my mind, and how the priests of biblical times must have rejoiced in the counting the Omer, it prompts me to joyfully count the Omer in anticipation of what I will discover through studying the text that has been recommended for us to read, and it also excites me to think that maybe, because of my willing obedience in keeping this Command, that Yahweh will manifest Himself to me in some way. I want everyone to understand that **IT IS** a privilege and **NOT A BURDEN** to follow Yahweh's Commandments and especially those that we find in *Vayiqra 23*. But before commenting on today's *verses* and some other thoughts, let me first direct you to reading the following verses.

Psalm 23:1-7

1 Yahweh is רֹעִי, Ro'iy, my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures: he leads me beside the still waters. 3 He restores my soul: he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies: You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over. 6 Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me, all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of Yahweh for ever.

As I meditate on this Psalm, I get beautiful pictures in my minds eye. For example I have imagined what it would be like to have my soul restored to a right relationship with Yahweh, a relationship whereby I rejoice always, in obeying all the Words of His Torah of Life, regardless of what is happening in my Life? What do you think it means to have ones soul restored? Well, it all depends on what you believe the soul of man was created to do. I believe that Yahweh created souls, human beings, so that they could commune with Him, and learn to be Holy as He is Holy. Furthermore when the Psalmist says, that Yahweh restores his soul, it means that his soul was **NOT** functioning in the manner that Yahweh created it to function in the first place, and that is why, the Psalmist's soul needed to be restored. Now once the Psalmist's soul is indeed restored, what happens next? The Psalmist says that from the point where his soul was restored, that Yahweh, then lead him, into

Yahweh's path of Righteousness. If that is the case, then it would be beneficial for us to know what Yahweh's Path of Righteousness **IS**, that he lead to Psalmist on?

*Deuteronomy 6:24-25 And Yahweh Commanded us **TO DO ALL** these Statutes, to fear Yahweh our Elohim (the fear of YHVH is the beginning of Wisdom), for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And **it shall be our RIGHTEOUSNESS, IF WE OBSERVE TO DO ALL** these Commandments (the Words of His Torah of Life) before Yahweh our Elohim, **as He has Commanded us.***

Psalms 119: 25-32

My soul cleaves to the dust; revive me according to Your Word (Torah). I have told of my ways, and You have answered me; teach me Your statutes (Torah). Make me understand the way of Your precepts (Torah), so I will meditate on Your wonders. My soul weeps because of grief; strengthen me according to Your Word (Torah). Remove the false way from me, and graciously grant me Your Torah. I have chosen the faithful way (Torah); I have placed Your ordinances (Torah) before me. I cling to Your testimonies (Torah); O Yahweh, do not put me to shame! I shall run the way of Your commandments (Torah), for You will enlarge my heart"

When I read these *verses* and meditate on who I am, in the grand scheme of things, I feel so insignificant, I feel like I am lower than dust. For, I am but one person, in the billions of people that are on the earth, today, and our earth. is but one planet in a galaxy that has billions of stars and other planets, and our galaxy is but one of another billion galaxies, and it kind of makes me feel totally insignificant, until I realize, that **IT IS** Elohim that has formed me, and the Creator of all these people, planets and galaxies, has told me in His Word, that **HE LOVES ME**. And to prove that **HE LOVES ME**, He sent His only begotten Son, to **DIE** on the cross, **FOR ME**, so that I would have the opportunity to spend eternity with Him. Therefore, while, to the world, I truly am insignificant, yet to Elohim, I am so precious to Him, that He sent His only begotten Son to die a horrible death on my behalf, so that I would have the opportunity, to live with Him for eternity. That, my friends, **IS WHAT** our heavenly Father has done for each and every one of us, He offers each and every one of us, His **INFINITE UNCONDITIONAL LOVE**. However, while His love is given freely to all people, His blessings, which are too numerous to mention, are only activated by obedience to the Words of His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Torah of Life.

In ancient Yisrael, the priests would typically recite a Psalm of David that in essence declared that the *earth is Yahweh's and the fullness thereof*.

*The earth is Yahweh's, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it. For He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers. Who may ascend into the hill of Yahweh? And who may stand in His Holy Place? The person who has **clean hands**, and **a pure heart**, and who **has NOT lifted up his soul to falsehood** and **has NOT sworn deceitfully**. **HE** is the one that shall receive blessings from Yahweh and righteousness from the Elohim of his salvation. This is the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your Face; even Ya'aqov. Selah. Lift up your heads, O gates, and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in! Who is the King of glory? Yahweh strong and mighty, Yahweh mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O gates, and lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in! Who is this King of glory? Yahweh of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah (Psalms 24:1-10).*

As I read this Psalm of David, I am reminded of the absolute sovereignty of our Creator, and His dominion over His Creation. I am also humbled by the reality of who can actually come into His presence, on the hill of Yahweh or at the altar on the Temple Mount. Only those with *clean hands* and a *pure heart*, who *have NOT lifted up their souls to falsehood or sworn deceitfully*, are allowed to participate in the offering of sacrifices.

As I reflected upon these beautiful words of praise, I thought about the teaching on the specifics of the *Minchah*, or grain offering that corresponds to the *counting of the Omer*. For after all, the count that we are making until *Shavuot*, has to do with the grain offering that was done daily at the altar, before the temple was destroyed by the Romans. So as I considered some of the details in *Vayiqra 2* about the grain offering, I believe, I gained a deeper understanding of what Yahweh is teaching us.

Apparently, an *Omer* of grain, or one-tenth of an *Ephah*, is an ancient measurement equivalent to the amount of fine flour required for one loaf of *Challah* bread, or roughly, the needs for one day of bread, or, the amount for our *daily bread*. Then, with further research, I discovered that when the Holy One was supplying Yisrael with *Manna*, when they were on their wilderness journey for forty years, the daily requirement was considered one *omer of manna*. This is what Yahweh has Commanded, *Gather of it [Manna] every man as much as he should eat; you shall take an omer apiece according to the number of persons each of you has in his tent (Exodus 16:16)*.

Here in this passage of Exodus, we are told that Yahweh, our Elohim, *IS* our provider of *daily bread* in the Wilderness. But is He not, also, the provider of our *daily bread* as we go about our way, years removed from the trials of the sojourn to the Promised Land? Does He not cause the increase in our crops? The different Psalmists that wrote these Psalms remind us, through their Psalms, that Yahweh is indeed, our provider.

The earth has yielded Its produce; Elohim, our Elohim, blesses us (Psalms 67:6).
The earth is Yahweh's, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it (Psalms 24:1).

Finally, as we look at one specific *verse* from *Psalm 119* today, we are reminded of just how important *IT IS* to reflect and meditate upon His Word and His Torah. This one *verse* really seemed to encourage me this morning. *Make me understand the Way of Your precepts, so I will meditate on Your wonders (Pala) (Psalms 119:27).*

As I considered the way of His precepts, and began to meditate on this Psalm, the word *wonders* grabbed my attention. The English word *wonder[s]*, is translated from the Hebrew word *Pala*, פלא, for after all, it is indeed an absolute wonder, that the Creator, literally provides our daily bread through the incredible creation of the different species of grains and other edible plants. In His creative genius, He is not only responsible for the variety, but also for their increase and growth. Even something as seemingly simple as a sheaf of barley or grain of wheat, is an incredibly complex aspect of His created order, that He has formed and provided for our daily sustenance. I am showing you all of this so that you can see, His Word, His Bread, from the perspective of each letter. The Letter Pey, פ, means mouth, the letter Lamed, ל, is a sign of authority and it also means to teach and learn, and the letter Aleph, א, represents our Messiah, the Words of the Living Torah made flesh, furthermore, the word *Pala*, פלא, is also the very same spelling as the Word *Paleo*, which speaks of the original language that Yahweh gave all of us, before He sovereignly chose to confuse man's

languages, when mankind unilaterally chose to build the tower of Babel, to show the world that they were gods also.

I believe that this is the very language that Daniel was told by Yahweh, to hide in a book and seal it. Together, these three letters, tell us that the Mouth of Messiah, the Aleph **א**, speaks words of instruction and wisdom, that teach all who listen to them, and willingly choose to believe and follow them, how we are to live holy Lives, in order to qualify to enter into the kingdom of Elohim.

Then I noted that the word Pala, was also used in yesterday's meditation and how it directly tied into the wonderful things from the Torah. *Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful (Pala, Paleo) things from Your Torah (Psalm 119:18).*

Then, I concentrated on some of the *wonderful things* that are found in the Father's Torah of Life, and the fact that the Holy One of Yisrael, was slowly opening my eyes, my understanding, to the blessings that are associated with **OBEDIENCE to Words of His Torah**, and the fact that I was actually obeying one of His Torah Commands, by counting the *Omer*, made me feel even more encourage and excited. The fact that I am actually taking the time to follow one of Yahweh's Torah Commandments, that for years in the past, I had simply overlooked, because of my lack of knowledge, **IS** very encouraging and rewarding to me. And now, as is His Way, Yahweh **IS** allowing me to praise Him for not only the sustenance that He provides for me o a daily basis, but for the opportunity to spend some time reflecting on some of His wonders.

Next, the thought of our obedience to count the Omer as a reflection of our love for Him, came to mind. Whether we physically give back to Him, just a small amount, of what He has freely given to us, or whether we simply mentally acknowledge our dependence upon Him for His provision, we have to understand, that the fact that we are taking the time to recognize His presence in our lives, by obeying His Commandment of the Omer count, gives Him great pleasure. As a result of our obedience, I believe that He desires to give us more and more understanding regarding His Ways, His Torah of Life, for this is what Mosheh tells the Yisraelites, as he comes to the end of his life. *The secret things belong to Yahweh our Elohim, **BUT the things revealed belong TO US AND TO OUR SONS FOREVER, SO THAT WE MAY BE PROMPTED TO OBSERVE ALL THE WORDS OF THIS TORAH** (Deuteronomy 29:29).*

How many secret things do you think Yahweh will reveal to those who have willingly chosen to observe **ALL** of the Words of the Torah? I don't know, but perhaps, during the next forty-five days He will reveal more of who He truly is, and His wondrous ways, to the people who are setting the time aside to count the Omer, as we are commanded to do. And just to consider that prospect is, in and of itself, a reason to continue to count the Omer, as we approach the Feast of Weeks. For the earth and its fullness is His, and just maybe, He has more wonders to share with each and every one of us!

Exercise for today: meditate on what it means to truly surrender our minds to Yahweh and to study His Word, and to have clean hands and a pure heart.

Verse 25 My soul cleaves unto the dust: I want You to quicken me according to Your Word.

Here the Psalmist is saying that his soul, his whole being, is clinging to the dust, which means that he is ready to die, unless Yahweh saves him, for, from the dust we came and to the dust we will return, and he, therefore, asks Yahweh to **quicken him**, to give him life according to what Yahweh has said and promised in His inerrant and everlasting Word.

Verse 26 I have declared my ways, and You heard me: teach me Your Statutes.

Here the Psalmist declares the way that he wants to conduct his life, and he says to Yahweh, You have heard my words, You know my heart, now please teach me Your Ways, Your Statutes, Your inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions **THAT I MAY LIVE AND WALK IN YOUR WAYS**.

Verse 27 Make me to understand the way of Your Precepts: so shall I talk of Your wondrous works.

The Psalmist shows his love for Yahweh's Word, and he again asks Yahweh, to **MAKE** him understand His **WAYS**, for the Psalmist wants to understand Yahweh's Statutes, which are part of His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, and the Psalmist promises Yahweh, that when his understanding **is** indeed increased, he will broadcast to the world, Yahweh's wonderful works.

Verse 28 My soul melts for heaviness: strengthen You me according unto Your Word.

Here the Psalmist is saying that the cares of this world are causing him to faint and fall into despair, and he asks Yahweh **to strengthen his resolve** in the manner that Yahweh has promised in His Word.

Verse 29 Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me Your Torah (Law) graciously.

Here the Psalmist again opens up his heart, and confesses that his flesh sometimes succumbs to Sin, to transgressing the Words of Yahweh's Torah of Life, and he asks Yahweh, to grant him His Torah. In other words, he is asking Yahweh to fill him with His knowledge and wisdom, and Yahweh's knowledge and wisdom can only be found in the Words of His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, the Words of His Torah of Life. The Psalmist is determined, as we should **ALL** be, to walk in the Ways of Yahweh everyday of his life.

Verse 30 I have chosen the Way of Truth (Torah): Your judgments have I laid before me.

The words, the **WAY of TRUTH, IS** a metaphor for the Words of the Torah, Yahweh's inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Torah of life. The Psalmist tells us that he has put the Way of **TRUTH** (Psalm 119:142), the Torah of Yahweh before him, in order that he may obey the Torah with all of his heart, mind, soul and strength.

Verse 31 I have stuck unto Your Testimonies: O Yahweh, put me not to shame (בִּישׁ, Bush).

Here the Psalmist affirms that he has obeyed Yahweh's Testimonies, His Torah, His inerrant and everlasting Word as best as he can, and he asks Yahweh to **NOT** let him be disappointment and not let him turn from keeping and doing Yahweh's Word, because that kind of behaviour brings shame to **ALL** those who have surrendered hearts.

Verse 32 I will run the way of Your Commandments, when You shall enlarge my heart.

Here the Psalmist says that he will obey the Ways, or the Commandments of Yahweh, and to that purpose, he asks Yahweh to enlarge his heart. He asks Yahweh to enlarge his heart so that his heart may begin to contain the beauty and vastness of Yahweh's Word, His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Words of Life, and that my friends should be our meditation and prayer for today. May Yahweh enlarge **ALL** of our hearts in order that we may accept **ALL** of His Love.

Studying and keeping Torah together as a community.

*Have a great Elohim blessed week and may Yahweh bless your every thought,
and your every deed. Until we meet again, שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם, Shalom Aleykem. Amein!*